UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Jefferson Branch Louisville Free Public Library

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

1718 West Jefferson Street   __NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN		CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
Louisville,	__ VICINITY OF	3 & 4

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
Kentucky	021	Jefferson	111

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	__PUBLIC	__OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	__MUSEUM
X_BUILDING(S)	X_PRIVATE	X_UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	__PARK
__STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	__PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	__ENTERTAINMENT	__RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	X_YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	__YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		__NO	__MILITARY	X_OTHER: vacant

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME   ✓
Jan Waddell

STREET & NUMBER
1653 Hale Avenue

CITY, TOWN		STATE
Louisville,	__ VICINITY OF	Kentucky 40210

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS,ETC.   Jefferson County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

600 West Jefferson Street

CITY, TOWN	STATE
Louisville,	Kentucky 40202

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Survey of Historic Sites in Kentucky

DATE

1978   __FEDERAL X_STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS   Kentucky Heritage Commission

CITY, TOWN		
Frankfort,	Kentucky	STATE

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Jefferson Branch Library is another lovely specimen of the Carnegie-endowed libraries. It is situated in the northwestern corner of Western Cemetery on Jefferson Street in Louisville, between 17th and 18th Streets. Because of its proximity to the cemetery, the library is particularly prominent. Directly to the north are large handsome residences of 1880s vintage. To the south, modest residences, primarily shotguns from the late nineteenth century, reflect the diverse clientele to which the Jefferson Branch Library catered. To both east and west are predominantly residential areas of the same period. The area is comprised of predominantly low income families, with commercial and industrial uses interspersed. Deterioration from the original middle to high income residences is evident, but has stablized in recent years. The Jefferson Branch Library remains, as do several structures to the north, as a reminder of the more prosperous days of the past.

The Jefferson Branch of the Louisville Free Public Library was completed in 1913. It was designed in a modified Beaux-Arts style by local architect D. X. Murphy. The building has a T-shaped plan, with the front rectangular section almost hiding the rear section. The style is consistent, the rear section is less decorated, and almost appears to be an after-thought.

The main front section is constructed of red brick and smooth surface stone. Course surface stone is used for the foundation. The facade is symmetrical, with large window groupings on either side of the entrance, creating three bays. The central bay, the entrance, nearly one-third of the facade, is entirely of stone. Stone steps rise from street level to the foundation level of the building, and again rise to the entrance. Double doors with an oversized transom are contained within a stone frame decorated with circular patterns. A simple but elegant pediment above the entrance is supported by detailed brackets. On either side of the doors, but still within the central bay, are two ornate roundels with graceful swags below. Above the roundels, flanking the pediment, are equally ornate cartouches.

The two side bays of the facade are identical. Three adjacent windows of equal proportion with stone posts, lintels and sills, are capped by a central pediment, slightly smaller than the pediment over the entrance. The window groupings are a Palladian derivative.

The sides of the building contain the same window grouping found on the facade, and are directly proportionate to those bays on the facade which flank the entrance.

Large stone quoins not only give the corners of the library the visual weight for which they were designed, but visually aid the architectural divisions of the structure, and create a chromatic balance of materials. Equally necessary for visual weight and balance, is the stone band just below the roof line. The band is as wide as the foundation is deep for balance, but is of smooth surface stone rather than rough surface stone, allowing the visual weight to rest on the foundation. The band is also pierced by simple roundels, contributing to the effect of lightness. Directly over the entrance, incised in the band, is "Louisville Free Public Library - Jefferson Branch."

The tile roof is hipped, and the deep overhang with wide flat brackets contains the whole building emphatically and gracefully.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
_PREHISTORIC	_ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	_COMMUNITY PLANNING	_LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	_RELIGION
_1400-1499	_ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	_CONSERVATION	_LAW	_SCIENCE
_1500-1599	_AGRICULTURE	_ECONOMICS	_LITERATURE	_SCULPTURE
_1600-1699	_X_ARCHITECTURE	_X_EDUCATION	_MILITARY	_SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
_1700-1799	_ART	_ENGINEERING	_MUSIC	_THEATER
_1800-1899	_COMMERCE	_EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	_PHILOSOPHY	_TRANSPORTATION
_X_1900-	_COMMUNICATIONS	_INDUSTRY	_POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	_OTHER (SPECIFY)
		_INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1912-1913   BUILDER/ARCHITECT
D. X. Murphy & Bros.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Jefferson Branch Library at 18th and Jefferson Streets, the seventh branch of the Louisville Free Public Library, was designed by the local architectural firm of D. X. Murphy and Brothers. Designed in the Beaux-Arts style, this library remains as a handsome example of the local treatment of the Beaux-Arts. It is also representative of a period in the first years of the twentieth century that saw the rapid growth of free lending libraries, stimulated by the generosity of Andrew Carnegie.

In earlier years, Louisville had been served by a number of privately operated library societies. It was not, however, until Carnegie--steel magnate, nineteenth-century industrialist and philanthropist--initiated a national funding program for the construction of library buildings, that the current system was organized. After several years of delays, the Main Branch of the Louisville Free Public Library was opened in June, 1908. Branch libraries rapidly thereafter began opening.

Many branch libraries throughout the city opened in temporary quarters while Cargegie funding was solicited. This, however, was not the case with the Jefferson Branch Library. The residents of the west end, recognizing a need for a library in their area, took full charge of the establishment of the Jefferson Branch. A committee was established in April, 1911, to work with Librarian Wm. Lust, of the Main Branch, and the Board of Directors of the Library. Another committee was established to select a site.

The conditions under which Carnegie funds were acquired were basically two-fold. First, the recipient was required to give proof that remaining costs could be accommmodated, and secondly, the Carnegie allotment would not cover the purchase of the property upon which the library was to stand.

The first condition was met by the Louisville Free Public Library, but the second was left to the resources of the community. Having selected a site--the northwestern corner of the Western Cemetery, previously used as a playground--the West End Committee set about soliciting financial support. A few bulk contributions were made, but the most significant part of the $1,375 needed to obtain the property, was acquired by selling half-inch square lots to the local residents for $1.25 per lot. The full amount was collected in only three months. In November, 1911, the West End Committee presented the deed to the Library Board.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Board of Directors of the Louisville Free Public Library, Annual Report for year Ending
   August 31, 1912.

                . Annual Report for year Ending August 31, 1913.
                . Carnegie Centenary Program, 1935.
                . Jefferson Branch Library Opening Program, March 6, 1913.
                . Scrapbook.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approx. 1 acre

QUADRANGLE NAME New Albany Quadrangle   QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A |1 6| |6 0 6 7 8 0| |4 2 3 4 7 2 0| B |_|_| |_|_|_|_|_|_| |_|_|_|_|_|_|
   ZONE EASTING   NORTHING   ZONE EASTING   NORTHING

C |_|_| |_|_|_|_|_|_| |_|_|_|_|_|_| D |_|_| |_|_|_|_|_|_| |_|_|_|_|_|_|

E |_|_| |_|_|_|_|_|_| |_|_|_|_|_|_| F |_|_| |_|_|_|_|_|_| |_|_|_|_|_|_|

G |_|_| |_|_|_|_|_|_| |_|_|_|_|_|_| H |_|_| |_|_|_|_|_|_| |_|_|_|_|_|_|

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Block 14F - Lot 120   City of Louisville, Jefferson, Kentucky

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE
  M. A. Allgeier - Researcher

ORGANIZATION	DATE
Louisville Landmarks Commission	December 14, 1978

STREET & NUMBER	TELEPHONE
727 West Main Street	587-3501

CITY OR TOWN	STATE
Louisville,	Kentucky 40202

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL ___   STATE ___   LOCAL ✔

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I
hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the
criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE _Eldred W. Neuton_

TITLE   DATE 5-19-79

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The rear section of the library which is perpendicular to the main block, generally, but moderately follows the same design. Each side is identical. Three adjacent windows of equal dimensions are divided by narrow stone posts. Two stone bands, both narrow, are situated above the windows a few feet above the undecorated roof line. The roof is flat.

The only decorations on the rear section of the library are stone tablet-like features with pediments on either side of the window groupings.

Beaux-Arts Classicism in Louisville reached its pinnacle in the design of the Louisville Free Public Library on York Street in 1908, designed by Pilcher and Tachau of New York. The Jefferson Branch Library is typical of Beaux-Arts in Louisville. Although modified in detail and reduced in scale, the basic Beaux-Arts features exist. The local interpretation of Beaux-Arts Classicism by D. X. Murphy was widely accepted in his day, and remains a grand spectacle of the period.

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DATE ENTERED   JUL 1 8 1979

In the same month, the Board selected D. X. Murphy and Brothers as the architectural firm to design the Jefferson Branch Library. An article in the February 29, 1912 edition of the Louisville Courier-Journal, illustrated the proposed front elevation for the new branch. The article also stated, "the West End Branch Library, for which plans have nearly been completed by D. X. Murphy and Brothers Architects, will rank with the most attractive buildings of its type in the city."

On March 17, 1912, the Louisville Courier-Journal published the list of bidders who were awarded the construction contracts for the Jefferson Branch Library. The contracts totaled $16,640.60,with an additional $1,485 for fixtures, and $906.28 for the architects fee.

The cornerstone was laid with impressive ceremonies on June 22, 1912. In describing the contents of the cornerstone box, a Courier-Journal account of the ceremony stated:"In addition to the names of the contributors of the site fund the box placed in the corner-stone contains copies of the daily paper, a copy of the deed to the property, the names of the ushers and all who took part in the exercise, a copy of the programme, a copy of the New Testament, a baby ring belonging to little Miss Alice Miller, the annual report of the Library Board of Trustees for the year ended August, 1911, and a memorial got up by an assistant librarian containing the names of all the trustees of the library and other data."

Although the library was scheduled to open in January, 1913, faulty construction and additional costs delayed the opening. Finally, on March 6, 1913, the library was opened to the public. In the program of the opening ceremony, the final costs were revealed: building construction, $21,161.96 and furniture, $1,542.10. This total amount, $22,704.06 was paid for through the Carnegie Foundation.

The Jefferson Branch Library served the west end community for sixty-two years, closing in December, 1975.

The architectural quality of the Jefferson Branch Library is typical of the many noted buildings designed by D. X. Murphy and Brothers. Dennis X. Murphy (1854-1933), the senior partner of the firm,was born and educated in Louisville. He began his architectural career as a draftsman for the prestigious firm of Henry Whitestone in 1874. Whitestone was Louisville's most outstanding mid-nineteenth century architect. In 1881, upon Whitestone's retirement, Murphy became his successor. James C. Murphy joined his brother in 1890 and formed the partnership of D. X. Murphy and Brothers Architects. Peter J. Murphy, another brother, joined the firm at a later date. Some outstanding examples of their work include the Jefferson County Jail (1902-1905), (approved National Register, July, 1973);

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the grandstand at Churchill Downs (1894); St. Boniface Church and rectory (1893); the City Hospital (1911); and the German Bank (1913).

The Beaux-Arts was a popular style in Louisville, used most magnificently in the design of the main branch of the Louisville Free Public Library, by Pilcher and Tachau of New York. This classical urge was promoted by the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago, and continued locally by the works of D. X. Murphy and other firms such as McDonald and Dodd.

A precedent was well established in 1911 by the Library Board for quality architecture when the design contract was awarded to D. X. Murphy. Not only the Main Branch, but the Western Branch (1907-08), (approved National Register, December, 1975), by McDonald and Dodd and the Shelby Branch, by Arthur Loomis (1910-11) reflect the high design consciousness of the Library Board. The hiring of the renowned Olmstead Brothers of Brooklyn, Massachusetts for landscape services is another example of their design consciousness.

D. X. Murphy obtained, in the design of the Jefferson Branch Library, an equivalent level of quality design. Murphy modified the style of the Main and of the Western Branch Libraries, and arrived at a design which clearly reflects the established classical precedent but remains unique in its simplicity.

The people of the west end who fought so diligently for a branch library, and who initiated the grassroots efforts at obtaining that library, were surely proud of and pleased with the excellent result of their efforts and Murphy's expertise.

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Jefferson Branch Louisville Free
Free Public

CONTINUATION SHEET   ITEM NUMBER   9   PAGE   2

"Cornerstone of Branch Library in West Jefferson Laid with Fitting Ceremonies."
    The (Louisville) Courier-Journal, June 23, 1912, sec. 1. p. 9.

"Jefferson Branch Library Opened in West End." The (Louisville) Courier-Journal,
    March 7, 1913, p. 10.

Jones, Elizabeth F. "Henry Whitestone Nineteenth-Century Louisville Architect."
    Unpublished Master Thesis, University of Louisville, 1974.

"West End Branch Library Bids Let." The (Louisville) Herald, March 17, 1912.

Withey, Henry F. and E. R. Biographical Dictionary of American Architects.
    Los Angeles: New Age Publishing Co., 1956.
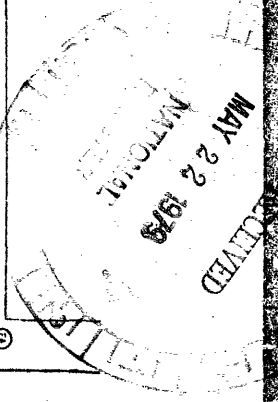
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GREEN AL.

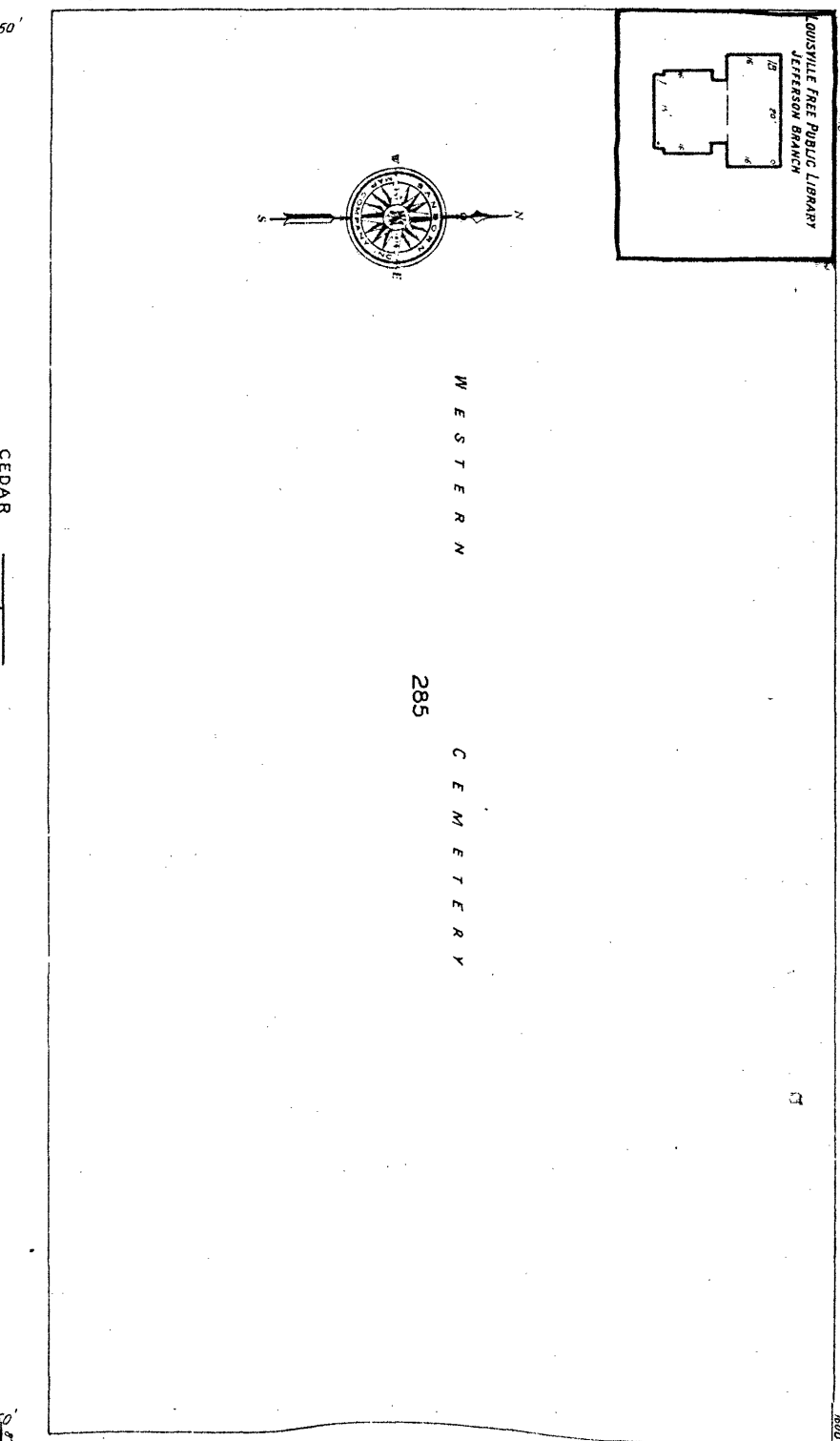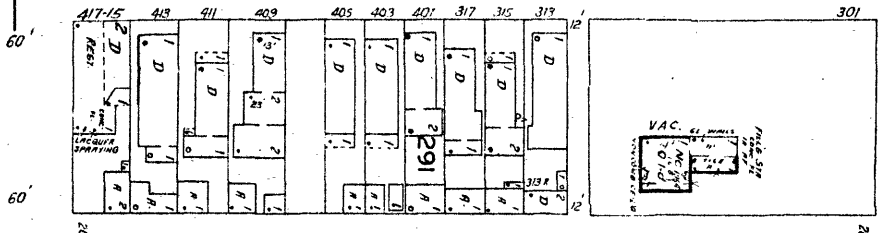427 | 425 | 423 | 419

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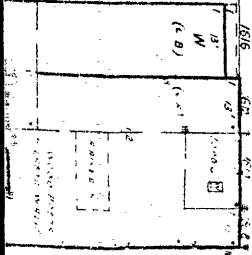
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19W
S. 17TH ST.

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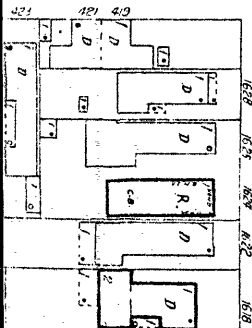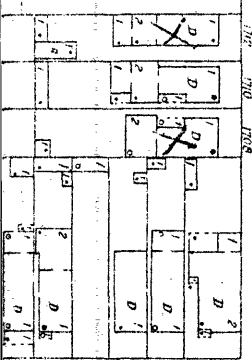
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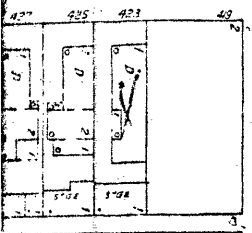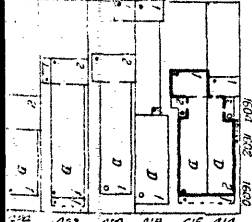
Jefferson Branch Louisville
Free Public Library
1718 West Jefferson St.
Louisville, Jefferson County,
Kentucky
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Map 2 - Sanborn Map